

FIELD

LAYS OF WEST

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY



A
000069193
1





05
RA
0
VW
ES
2
H
ES
2
H
C
A
C
DR
0
E
LE
3
VE
H

THE
LIBRARY
OF THE
MUSEUM
OF
ART AND
ARCHAEOLOGY
OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE
1871

First edition

LAYS OF WEST AFRICA

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR:

(Reviews of which will be found at end of Book).

TRAVEL—

"Verb. Sap. on going to West Africa."

"Verb Sap. on going to East Afrlca."

FICTION—

"The Exaggerators."

LAYS OF WEST AFRICA AND DITTIES OF THE COAST

BY
ALAN FIELD



FIRST EDITION

LONDON : George Philip & Son, Ltd., 32 Fleet Street
LIVERPOOL : Philip, Son & Nephew, Ltd., 45-51 South Castle Street

—
1908



Stack
Annex

00 ENG
500
7421

THIS LITTLE BOOK IS
Dedicated
WITH VERY SINCERE RESPECT
TO
THE ANOPHELES MOSQUITO
The Real Governor-General of British West Africa,
AND TO
HIS ENEMY
The President of The Liverpool School of Medicine
SIR ALFRED JONES, K.C.M.G., ETC.
TO WHOM
WEST AFRICA OWES THE HOPE THAT MALARIA
THAT SCOURGE OF THE TROPICS
MAY SOME DAY BE REMOVED FROM THE NUMBER
OF THE WHITE MAN'S BURDENS.

5007421

1674051

*West Africa, thou jade of query!
Light o' love, faithless and burning true.
Whose men in thrall are weary, weary,
Embraced they hate. Longing, are dreary
Afar through other lands their dearie.
They eat their hearts out learning you
West Africa, thou jade of query!
Light o' love, false and yet burning true.*

CONTENTS.



| | PAGE |
|--|------|
| 1. "The Soul of the West Coast Trader" - - - | 1 |
| 2. "The Niger Company's Agent" - - - | 3 |
| 3. "Palm-oil, Palm-oil" - - - | 5 |
| 4. "The Hausa" - - - | 6 |
| 5. "The Rubaiyat of an Africoaster" - - - | 9 |
| 6. "Improving the Breed" - - - | 11 |
| 7. "On Leave" - - - | 17 |
| 8. "Devil Worship" - - - | 17 |
| 9. "Perhaps 'twould be well" - - - | 20 |
| 10. "West African Sport!" - - - | 22 |
| 11. "Two Wrongs" { "Red Rubber" - - - | 25 |
| " The Unemployed " - - - | 26 |
| 12. "The Africoast" - - - | 28 |
| 13. "The Governor and the Climate" - - - | 30 |
| 14. "Help! Help!" - - - | 35 |
| 15. "Lokoja" - - - | 39 |
| 16. "Pause, my Brethren" - - - | 40 |
| 17. "Sweet Mouth Verse" - - - | 41 |
| 18. "The Churn" - - - | 42 |
| 19. "The Sub-Agent" (Ideal and real) - - - | 43 |
| 20. "Wind him, lass!" - - - | 44 |
| 21. "The Retired Man" - - - | 46 |
| 22. "Northern Nigeria" - - - | 47 |
| 23. "Sonnet" - - - | 48 |
| 24. "In a Hammock" - - - | 48 |
| 25. "Home" - - - | 49 |
| 26. "Teeth" - - - | 50 |
| 27. "A. and B." - - - | 51 |
| 28. "Fooled by the Forest" - - - | 53 |
| 29. "One Reason Why" - - - | 64 |
| 30. "Pink-eyed Bill" - - - | 65 |
| 31. "Sanu da gajia" - - - | 68 |
| 32. "The Bailiff's Song" - - - | 69 |
| 33. "Sai Anjima" - - - | 70 |

The Soul of the West Coast Trader.



The Padré wanted five hundred clear
To build his tin-roof church.
Old Peter Smith did not think that dear.
For at sixty-seven
One thinks upon heaven,
And one fears to be left in the lurch.
How one dreads like a schoolboy the birch!

P. Smith, of the bad old, mad old, days,
Could raise your hair with tales
Of the Coaster adventurer's ways.
Re queer bills of lading,
Weird creek-trips, slave-raiding,
And most horrible contents of bales.
Most fraudulent juggling with scales.

He had won and lost three fortunes good.
His fourth safe banked at Home.
He would make his peace as Christians should.
So he bought the Mission
A Kirk and position.
Gave *them* their Church, a steam-launch to Rome,
And heavily "dashed*" the Ju-Ju "*Yome*."

A West Coast Trader has not much mind
To give to the Creeds at all.
And Peter's life was not of that kind
To choose theologies,
Hence his apologies
Made, and gifts to such sects he'd recall
Had "big palaver†" spiritual.

**Dashed*—Gave presents of cash or in kind.

†*Big Palaver*—Much influence.

You never will heed, so poets sing,
Aught else but Burma's call
If East of Suez you've had your fling
Where the Minkoli dwells
'Neath the kyaung's htee bells.
The Coast has the same charm-spell for all,
West Africa known is West Africa's thrall.

So Peter, delaying from boat to boat,
Put off his voyage too late.
And, instead of finding himself afloat,
As happens so often
"Went home" to a coffin.
A different Home than he wished at that date.
It "cut up very fat" to his heir, his estate.

Now, you will say, his troubles were o'er.
But now his woe began.
He hoped he had settled his spiritual score,
But discovered all three
Of the Powers that he
Had endowed here on earth by his plan.
Laid a claim to the soul of the man.

It looked much like a case for the Court
Of ultimate Appeal.
But occurred then a thing which cut short
The claims of the Pope,
And the Ju-Ju, to hope
For the spoil. While the Kirk could but feel
They were right to withdraw from the deal.

I think that I've said the career
Of our defunct deceased
Could hardly be held to be clear
From commission of acts
The Commandment enacts
Are stamped with the mark of the Beast.
Smith was charged with a hundred at least.

And the reason the Claimants withdrew
From the *in re Smith* affair
Was the rule "Give the Devil his due."
For the latter appeared
With a bill which he feared
Had a known prior claim to all there.
The Court rose, handing Smith to his care.

If a moral there lies, it is plain.
Let Trader men beware
That, although the desire for gain
In itself is no shame,
Yet you must "play the game"
"Conscience-money" don't pass "over there."
You can't hunt, and yet run with the hare.

The Niger Company's Agent.



*"Undoubtedly there is no loneliness so frightful as constant
companionship with an uncongenial person."*

Only one moment of pleasure in the throbbing time
I knew.

Time of the dragging day-longs, and night watches
without end.

When, with a full-charged heart and pen, I scratched
the dates right through

And noted on my calendar the time I'd yet to
spend.

The weeks and months sped on, nor crawled, when
I was quite alone.

The morning work, the mid-day snooze, the busy
Store, routine

Of ledger work, of exercise, the mails to all I'd
known,

Some river trips, my camera : I fought and beat the
spleen.

Until they said I needed help and sent Vansittart
down

I would have barred the Thing at Home, out there
I loathed his name.

Hated his voice, his laugh, his cough, his Ego, foot
to crown.

His very shadow strained my nerves. It was not
mine the blame.

Lord knows I tried.¹ to like the beast, ten months
were yet to go.¹

But not one kindred taste we had, no common
friend or talk.

He meddled with my servants, which, to those who
natives know,

Is anathema, and all my pets looked on him as a
hawk.

He broke the gun I lent him, upset all the clerks and
hurt

Little "Poo" my terrier whom I loved, and once I
caught him clean

Reading my dear girl's letters—kept my hands off
him as dirt.

How I did it is my wonder. Called me "giddy
old sardine."

It sounds funny now, the telling, but out there I used
to say

That I understood some murders. True, I used
to lie and plan

Ugly, ugly thoughts, until I flung my cartridges away.

And clenched my fists behind me when I had to
speak the man.

I learned the lesson once for all which lighthouse-keepers know,
Who never send two men alone to tend the Light and Bell,
That one or three can safely bear some time lone sentry-go
But two who hate and yet must mate is madness, death, or hell.

Palm=Oil.



Palm-oil, Palm-oil, all the fat puncheons are
Jammed in the lighter, the Kroo boys pack tighter
than surf can spring staves on the bar.
Out in the swell, you can see quite well, how she
rolls as the steamer waits
The Liverpool line, and I wish they were mine,
with their gilt-edged monopoly freights.
Though I think that the Germans cut rates,
And pay calls on convenient dates.
But, like handicap ages for weights,
Palm-oil, Palm-oil, competition's the thing
for rebates.

Palm-oil, Palm-oil, how does a clerk get a billet?
One is suspended and one recommended, the latter
proceeding to fill it.
The white man called Mist, er Smith on the List,
the kind of Colonial 'Burke'
Depends for the scheme, of his office routine, on his
capable "First-class clerk."
He's the man who arranges the work,
All his juniors know better than shirk,
Though they often must find it irk,
The Palm-oil, Palm-oil they pay to the fat
old Turk.

Palm-oil, Palm-oil, Officials they like what's rare.
 They like to send home, just to show how they
 roam, the king of Kaloozoo's chair.
 So accept it as "dash"* (and at Home its worth
 cash), from the Chief who's afraid to tell
 What the Resident knows quite well,
 That a little particular hell
 Exists in the Chieftain's *belle*
 Patrie. 'Tis a wonderful spell!
 Is Palm-oil, Palm-oil, The chair is at
 Christies to sell.

Palm-oil, Palm-oil, makes 'a marvellous kind of
 'chop'†
 You mix in the stew, any rubbish will do, and stir
 it all up in a slop.
 'Tis the West Coast curry, and, if you don't worry,
 they say that the taste will grow.
 But I cannot stand kippers boiled up with old
 slippers, my Cook-boy he knows that's so.
 And quick he would have to go
 For master "he lookum" and know.
 But, well-cooked, I own that, though
 Palm-oil, Palm-oil is greasy, I never say 'No.'

The Hausa.



Now the Hausa, and the Parsi, and the Jew,
 Are the few
 Of the people of the earth with double creed
 Word and deed.
 To Muhammed, to Jehovah, and the Sun
 Add yet one,
 Deifying mighty Mammon with their God.
 And 'tis odd
 How they manage both on equal thrones to place.
 Like the Ace

* *Dash*—Complimentary Present.

† 'Chop'-food, e.g. 'Palm-oil Chop' a kind of Olla podrida.

Of playing cards which shows the Spade designs,
 Yet entwines
 All the other suits, apart yet blent, are mixed
 So is fixed
 In a soul preserving, commerce-serving, style
 All the guile
 Of a Trader, and Financier, and Priest.
 They're the yeast
 Which leavens all the simpler Nations' dough.
 Where you go
 Throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, you see
 That these three,
 As the most elect of Heaven and the Banks,
 Offer thanks.

Abubekri, Cursetji, and Abraham
 "Skin the lamb,"
 Both the coloured aboriginal and white.
 But I write
 In these lines about West Africa, and so,
 I will show
 More especially the Hausa and his ways.
 How always
 From Calabar to Tunis and to Mecca
 He's the trekker *
 Who buys and sells (his deals *are* sells). The Hausa,
 From a Mauser
 To potted "chop,"† from gas-pipe guns to gin,
 (Cause of sin
 In the Mussulman or Pagan,) has the trade.
 He has made
 His language known, of merchandise the tongue,
 Tribes among
 Where the white man never ventures, for he boasts
 That the Coasts
 Are the white man's limit. He himself has none
 'Neath the Sun.

* *Trekker*—Traveller.

† *Chop*—Meat, any food.

His costume is a *tobe* (a flowing gown
Which comes down
To below his knees, has sleeves, is white or blue).
And they do
Geometrical designs in kind like lace
Which they place
In conventional positions o'er their robe
Called the *tobe*.
Their features more Egyptian than Arab,
As a scarab
You see carved. Their cotton breeks (*riga*) de rigueur
And their figure
Is dignified. They wear a puggri long,
And upon
It they place a quaint straw hat, rather yaller
While "Allah
Il Allah, Mahmood russool il Allah" would seem a
Good Kalima. *
Yet his prophet and his profit are to him
Synonym.
He likes upon his chest the dirty stains
Which remain
As the mark of scent. He thinks that it looks smart
In the Mart.

We recruit them, and they make a soldier keen.
I have seen
Them, when on a *war-palaver* take a town.
All around
In the bush were the inhabitants who shot
(Rather hot)
Poisoned arrows, but each Hausa cared no pip
But from hip
Occasionally fired a random shoot
For the loot
Of innumerable chickens filled his arms.
To the charms
Of cloth and goats for nothing, first he paid
(Ere he stayed

* *Kalima*—Confession of the Faith. "God is God and
Mahommed is his Prophet."

To obey the whistled calls of discipline
 To fall in)
 Tribute kin
 To that he pays when trading, when before
 Koran law
 Places gain. And yet, in corner tight, he can
 Play the man.
 And fight like any demon to the end,
 If a friend
 His officer has made of him. Its fair
 To add that, to all best belief, the foresaid case
 is rare
 But poultry is his foible. next to *mammies*.* Who
 shall dare
 To say that every Corps cannot to this tale find
 a pair?

The Rubaiyat of an Africoaster.



Embark! for Sailors in the Vessel's Hold
 Have plunged your Kit marked 'Cabin' clear and bold:
 And Lo! your Berth Mates very much object
 To find all your 'Chop'-Boxes in their Fold.

Dreaming on Deck of Her you left behind,
 And how last Night six Cocktails made you Blind:
 For Charity† the Paunchy Skipper craves
 "The Usual Thing" a Sovereign is you find.

And when, with Dislocating Jar and Bumps,
 You and your Fortunes in the Surf-Boat dumps
 The Mammy-Chair. You cannot but reflect
 Your Home-bound Cause—Blackwater or the Jumps?

* *Mammies*—Wives.

† *On the Elder Dempster Liners the Captains collect indefatigably for "The Lancashire Sea Training Home for Poor Boys," an estimable Charity.*

Some for Official Glories land, or run
From Hard-up Pasts, or Love, or 'just for Fun.'

Ah, take the Cash in whate'er Job you go
Nor heed the Summons of the distant Dun!

Here with the *Craw Craw**, and my Monthly Screw,
A Whiskey-Peg, a Bush-Cat brown,—while You
Are flirting at a Peckham tea-fight far
All Flesh is grass, though much less Green than Blue.

The Hope of Sport, or rapid Rise of Pay,
Lasts but one Tour, and then dies quite away.
But getting out of Touch with Things at Home
Perhaps for longer than you live you stay.

They say that smug young Counter-Jumpers keep
Old Bungalows where revelled Buck Black-Sheep
Half Europe's well-bred Wrong 'uns.' Each Wild Ass
Exiled, burned out his Heart and Somewhere lies asleep.

I sometimes think that never were such 'Toffs'
Militia 'Warts'† but 'Skippers' in the Waffs‡
Such Rustums! Warboys! Burning for a 'Show'§
Each the same Toast, to "Gas and Gaiters"|| quaffs.

The 'Boy' no Question makes of Truth or Lies
And if in Bush 'Death catch him. Master dies'
For Mammy-Palaver, his Trinkets loots
Brings in the Corpse, but ere Inventory flies.

Yellow Malaria strikes, and having struck
Remains: nor all thy Eu.-Quinine nor Luck
Shall purge thy Veins from the Mosquito's Gift
Though Governor thou, or merely in the Ruck.

But every Land has drawbacks. Europe holds
Bills, Stumer-Cheques, and Fogs, the Wife that scolds.
To compensate for Want of Books, and Ice,
More Suave Society, and Punkah's Zephyr Folds.

* *Craw Craw*—A Skin disease, *cf.*, 'Dhobies itch.'

† 'Warts'—Lieutenants.

‡ *Waffs*—West African Fowl-Filchers alias Frontier Force.

§ 'Show'—Expedition.

|| "Gas and Gaiters"—The S. African War Medal.

As it consoles the Grousing Soul to know
Of worse-off Others, to reflect on Woe
More poignant than his own. Let Coasters think
On what Sectarians say—They're worse-off Down Below.

Now when Thyself the First Time hap to pass
The West Coast Route. Treat all this Verse as Gas
Or Dreary Doggrel. When you reach the Spot
Where I made one, lift up a Chin-Chin Glass.

Improving the Breed.



There's an office where, in Upping Street, officials dwell
at ease

Sending C. M. Gs and lesser folk to billets over-seas.
For transitory Sec's-of State they've blandest toleration
But know *themselves* as permanent in salary and station.
Though Governors of distant lands seem kings, within
their borders,

When Home on leave they have to ask these gentlemen
for orders.

While the only things can wake their placid souls from
inanition

The ha'p'ny Press and next to that a Governor with
ambition.

The tale I'm going to tell you in the now succeeding
rhymes

Is typical of Red Tape when its "moving with the times."
Although we'll veil the country's name it is on the
Equator

While the route is via the N*g*r, which must suffice for
data.

The Colony is new that is so far as we're concerned
But quite half our native subjects, that they are so, have
not learned.

And all they who howl about the State in which the
Congo's been

Our "Punitive expeditions," one per mensem, have not
seen.

All "medal-hunters" know it well, a short year's "Tour"
 can show
 On a manly breast one disc at least and p'r'aps a D. S. O.
 There's a Company there which does not like its business
 noised abroad
 For although of course its history cannot contain a fraud
 Yet this Company, once Chartered, when it traded on
 its own
 Had vast responsibilities, a police force, and a loan.
 When the Trade of the Protectorate was well within its
 hands
 And all mineral concessions were upon the Comp'ny's
 lands
 Then there being nothing further that this Co: could
 turn to pelf
 It bethought it how it could absolve expenses from itself.
 So by means of ways so devious. How *are* these smart
 things done?
 But is not scrip tied in red-tape? I seem to have
 heard it's done.
 For SEVEN HUNDRED THOUSAND POUNDS
 unto the Government
 This Company sold its country, yet remained there at
 no rent.
 Now consider well the consequence, and note your share
 list well
 The Company's dividends are greater now than ere the
sell.
 The Empire has to now maintain the whole expensive
 State,
 A Political and Police Staff which they are a burden
 great
 The Company has a monopoly still of cash and trade
 And only pays its Agents who don't boast they're *over*
 paid
 The *Company* is rich. The *Country* pays no revenue
 'Tis enough to make you taxpayers laugh if there's
 humour in you.
 Now 'mong many quaint anomalies and muddles past
 all ken
 In this "comic-opera Colony" where we send our
 "broken men"

It happens that His Majesty's most High Commissioner
Had really truly hopes his country's something rich in her.
As it cannot earn or pay a cent but lives on grants in aid
That, (his own axe being ground by now), he's cranky
I'm afraid.

He dreamt bright dreams of railways and of wealth from
goodness knows

While at Home within the "Morning Post" some friend
his trumpet blows.

There *is* certainly a ten-mile tram upon a narrow gauge?
Which required some locomotives once and then Official's
sage

Although the toy line's three feet eight and that of course
they knew

And forgot the facts, as usual, sent out engines five feet
two.

Still, through blunders of Cr*wn Ag*nts, and officials
muddlement,

This Governor hopes on and will-until his time is spent
Thus once, when travelling round 'on tour,' his thoughts
were harping on

The everlasting problem what to raise some cash upon.
Cotton growing is not quick-returns, our taxes bring on
war

Yet all contiguous Colonies have revenues galore.

Till nearing a walled native town he saw out in the bush
Some weedy sheep some ditto cows among the herbage
lush.

He near fell off his *doki** with a splendid new idea
Here were stock potentialities which made a revenue
clear!

"Why of course the plan is simple, quite as plain as a *ju-ju*
"To import some fine prize-breeding strains is all there
is to do

"The Fulani too will jump at this, the chance of cattle
farms.

"While wool from sheep, and hides, and meat! To arms!"
he cried "To arms!"

At least he did not use those words, and meant "To *pen*!
To *pen*!"

* *Doki*—Pony.

(You see the pun?) "My scribing Staff, and all my writing men!"

"Indite me now in telling words a very strong despatch

"To Coln—I mean the C. O. Queer! I near said Colney Hatch.

"Put my meaning clear in *minutes* and repeat as a refrain

"All the estimates and reasons why I want a fine stud strain."

So the letter went, and duly came reply on H. M. S.

"Despatch read, and noted, please repeat on *Form X P. Q. S.*

Three years passed, the correspondence on the subject grew in bulk

Till it filled two office bungalows and a whole Muraji hulk

But at last one mail announced a fact, our Governor rubbed his eyes

"By S.S., as per margin, sheep, of, as per margin size "

"They come! They come! No bulls, but still the half a loaf is better

"Than none. Announce throughout the land about this splendid letter!"

What Hausas thought, or Fulanis, what Pagans hoped to find

Cannot be told for no one knows the black-man's coloured mind

Still, led by hope of something good in some way meaning gain,

They brought their scanty ovine flocks from bush and desert plain

Whether by white man's ju-ju or Dame Nature's simple fashion

Their herds they heard were to expand in great multiplication.

The longed-for day arrived, the sheep all saw a steamer's barge in

They counted them by head and tail, and found them "*as per margin*"

And then the Chief, to render all in proper course and sort

Told off the Transport Officer to send in a report.

All night the High Commissioner could get no rest nor slept

Within the T.O.'s* neighbouring house it seemed they revel kept

H.E.† from his verandah peeped. No there was no mistake

And firm he vowed he'd break the crowd who kept him so awake.

Such shrieks of mirth, such yells and howls, why, what untimely squawking!

"When morning comes" he grimly thought "'tis I will do the talking."

At early dawn the Governor, to wrathful measures wrought,

Sent for the Transport Officer to render his report.

For "that will be the thing" he thought "to bring things to a head"

"The youth cannot have done his work but played all night instead."

An orderly returned at once, and following on his heels,

With visage grin-contorted, came the man of mules and wheels.

Malapropos his manner. At his half-hid merriment

In steely tones the Chief demanded "Come! The document!"

"'Tis here, Sir, here!" with shaking hands, the T.O. said

"I've brought

"Your Excellency what you asked. I could but make it short."

The Governor perused the screed, two sentences he read

Re-read, sat down and read, got up and stamped and said

Oh, blank! blank! blank! but then his words mere fireworks became

*T.O.—Transport Officer.

†H.E.—His Excellency.

All through that day he did consign all, everything, to
flame.

The curious Staff who burned to know the reason of this
pain

Dared not approach. The T.O. weak from mirth
could not explain

Until at last a Harmattan gust eddied thro' the room

And blew the paper, the report, outside into the gloom.

The Justice Chief, three Secret'ries, the Police-lord, and
the Head

Of WAFFS* (for meaning see the note), grabbed,
caught the sheet, and read.

The usual formal opening one scanned then read aloud
And finishing fell shrieking as fell all the list'ning
crowd

These lines which gentle reader you and I must fain allow

Excuses are for Chiefs to rage and Staffs to make a row.

"Your Excellency's order I've the honour to obey

"And duly I've examined all the sheep which came to-day

"I hate to further say a word that could annoy and vex

"But they we hoped would raise the breed are NOT OF
ANY SEX.

"There is no single ewe nor ram in all the lot together

"I hold them in no stud regard, each wretched beast's
a WETHER."

Envoi.



Now you or I who are not trained to the Cr*wn Ag*nts
ways

If we had been that Governor might well have felt amaze
But he, who knew so well, how they with indents will
comply

Got calm at length, resigned himself, and SHARED
THE MUTTON PIE.

* *Waffs*—See page 10.

On Leave.



Funchal after Saḥ Lōn (Sierra Leone).

Like a moonscape in strong chiaroscuro,
Black and white, and as health is to ills
Like the contrasts of fire to zero
Is the hell of the Coast to these hills.

I have dwelt in the suburbs of Hades
Now I breathe in the precincts of bliss
When Fortune is frowns, then the jade is
Prepouting her lips for a kiss.
So I simmered in sulphurous summer
And cursed it, till Hope died insane
While my flesh seemed the garb of a mummer
Who acted a comedy "Pain."

Now I breathe, then the lungs gasped and
shrivelled.

Now I leap, then limbs leaden were strained.
Now a god, then a dish of bones devilled
Pleasure's friend,—once Pain's slave pain-
enchained.

Devil-Worship.



Stark and grim was the Ju-Ju old.
Dark and dim its abode.
Caked ancient blood as a loathly mould
Its sacrificial woad.
Its symbol carved was a grim male ghoul,
Its ornaments bones of snake.
Its dwelling a conical, thatched-hut foul
In a pestilent mangrove brake.

Tears and fears the villages owed.
Cowed and bowed they paid
To the priests (that is ever the priestly code).
And, once a month, a maid.
For then, said the priests, they could not bind
And the devil-god raged abroad.
Each full-moon night, shut the huts and blind.
Every priest was the Ju-Ju's bawd.

Hid in their huts the villagers heard
The rout and the din awhirl.
Dreading its halt, then none demurred
But thrust out a wretched girl.
Never again was the victim seen,
Dared none to follow or ask.
The fairest were toll to the Ju-Ju's spleen
To submit was the parents' task.

A Hausa trader, Dan Kano came
To the Pagan country to trade.
In Sulés compound hired a room,
And the time of his sojourn stayed.
Sulé's daughter was plump, and found
Love in the merchant's eyes.
Half her price he paid, and was bound
The rest to pay for the prize.

To trade Dan Kano hied away
Till the full sum he should earn.
Meanwhile the priests had marked a prey
And white did the full moon burn.
Trembling close in their huts all lay
On the night of dread and fear,
While the fiendish drums, and the yelling fray,
Came nearer and yet more near.

Where will it check for the halt of doom?
Ah! whose is the price to pay?
Outside that dwelling the death-drums boom
Where the Sulé household lay.
'Tis the fateful hour, the voice of power
Which none dare thwart or bide!
Sulé's daughter, no price, no dower,
Must forth as the Ju-Ju's bride!

Returned the Hausa, to clinch the deal,
To learn of the deed of fate.
Little he cared whose the hand did steal
Priest, Ju-Ju, or reprobate.
With him were four of his kin, well-armed,
To counsel him in his grief.
Robbed of desire and cash. Well charmed
He had need to be, the thief !

Bright shone the light of the tropic moon.
Bright on his sight, was the Hausa's eye.
Cowering in fear all the Pagans croon
Charms to avert their destiny.
Clear up the village's mainway came
The Ju-Ju, the discord, and din.
Dan Kano muttered the sacred name,
' Allah ! ' and rammed another slug in.

All dressed like devils in masks of hair.
The evil procession progressed.
Drumming, and jangling, and leaping in air,
Around one main figure possessed.
A full good charge had the Hausa's gun
His aim on the Arch-Fiend true
The Snider roared. See ! they run, they run
But jerking his last lies the great Ju-Ju.

From every hut arose Terror's wild cries.
But, swift the Hausa's are out !
Stripping and ripping the weird disguise
From the figure which dead in the moonlight lies.
Exposing it there to all startled eyes,
The Ju-Ju's chief priest without doubt.

Wild work that night the full moon saw,
Sulé the leader of pillage.
They caught the priests, paid off full score.
The long years past of fear and gore.
Dan Kano redeemed all his loss and more.
For a red revenge took the village.

But the 'kings' and the elders soon found with
regret
When the fear of the Devil was vanished
That the villages lawless became, and upset.
So by now they have probably got a new pet.
Some fresh Ju-Ju awful, a priesthood worse yet
Than the craft of the Ju-Ju they banished.

Perhaps.



Perhaps 'twould be well if "the Ladies"
Should make a descent on the Coast.
Though the heat 95° in the shade is
(A damp heat). We know that they boast
That their influence, charm and demeanour,
Responsible is that "the men"
Shave daily, and wear costumes cleaner
Than those you observe now and then.
What a change there would be in their habits
To the bachelors it would seem strange
But it *might* come to pass
The thermometer glass
Would go higher than ever the change.

Perhaps 'twould be well for the negro
Whose habit for ages is known.
To labourless lounge, and to see grow
All crops where he never has sown.
If, without going back to the slaving,
There could yet some discipline be.
Can't you fancy the letters and raving
At Home in the Press you would see?
It would change them to men from child-monkeys.
But the white Stay-at-homes who don't know
A Malay from black Jew,
Or Fulani from Kroo,
Would infallibly ignorant say 'No!'

Perhaps 'twould be well for that Journal
Whose name's the "West African Wail,"
If its editor cut this eternal
Reform of the Congo, to sail
To *our* Coasts, and, with brave self-effacement,
Ask Alfred the Great for a berth,*
And cease to review from his Casement†
The methods of ruling the earth.

The beam in the Congolese optic
Would be much fairer cleared if our own
Were quite cleansed of all motes
He'd find "copy" for notes
Down all of our Coasts from Sāh Lōn,

Perhaps 'twould be well for the public
If the lately made rule which "regrets"
"No adverts" (fróm Pears' Soap to Kubelik)
"May appear in Official Gazettes"
Was consistently ordered, and *in* force.
For unfair other firms now impeach
The fact that "a pull" now has *the* Stores
As the "only pebble on the beach."
To civilians the membership tickets
Would seem to say "keep off the grass."
But so generous they
That (so long as you pay
For your purchase) the ticket's a farce.

Perhaps 'twould be well for all new men
Ere purchasing uniform kit
To note that *some* firms are but Jew men
Though John Smith & Co. *sounds* quite Brit-
Ish enough to delude young officials
Who would warier be if they knew
That of John Smith the proper initials
Are Ikey Mo Shylock, a Jew.

Though the chosen race are no better
Or worse than us folk less elect
Still a Jew Tailor's bent
Is for fifty per shent
And there *are* British firms to select.

* *Sir Alfred Joues, K.C.M.G., of Messrs. Elder, Dempster.*
† *Mr. Casement, British Consul of Congo fame.*

West African Sport.



Me no fit to savee proper all them white men's curious
ways,

Them *bom baturi** ways,

Me think them sometimes craze.

Two year now gone me go for bush with Master and
he says,

"Me kill um beef † these days,"

"Me keep um 'head' always."

"You lookum beef, I dash ‡ you plenty, bush palaver
pays."

Monday start and Thursday catch them country where
beef libs

Where big and small beef libs.

One king small town me fibs

Him giving Master house, and Master one-time dash
him dibs. ¶

Me telling king, to Master me be all same like his ribs.

Me be friend to white man big

What Master dash him better gib,

To me, or polis coming, break that king with guns
and squibs.

Them king he fear too much and send him mammies
for to hide

While all him pickins cried.

Me talk um, plenty lied,

Me say them white man mad for beef and fit to there
abide

Until he get what wanting, then he leave that country-
side.

Him people quickly tried

For bush they one-time hied §

And kill two nice doe hartebeast. Such goddam
Master cried.

He say "You fool no savee" and he flog me hard
back-side.

* *Bom baturi*—Great white man.

¶ *Dibs*—Money.

† *Beef*—Any four-footed game.

§ *One time*—Immediately.

‡ *Dash*—Presents=bak shish.

I found the doggrel here-above my scoundrel horse-
boy wrote

And in my diary note

The following facts I quote

About the first shoot that I had since landing off the
boat.

I said I wished to kill some buck and taught my "boy"
by rote

I told the silly goat

That carriers would "tote

All them baggage" what *he* had to do was learn my
wish and know't

Interpret, and find out where game was plentiful and
show't.

We reached a little mud-walled town and camped.

'Boy' said that here

"Plenty beef" is living near.

I thought it rather queer

That only men were in the place but never guessed
the fear

Which my rascal had instilled, how he had made the
case appear

That my simple wants were deer

But that he (in lying sheer

Ananias was surpassed) must for peace be bribed.

'Twas clear

That our early-made departure would not cost a soul
a tear.

The bush-folk mind cannot, it seems, grasp as a
serious fact

A great white man should act

So palpably be cracked

As to toil, to shoot by his own self, what he could
quite enact

Should be done by his inferiors as a usual business
pact

So to show their anxious tact

They, with gas-pipe guns, the tract

Of country in the neighbourhood went through, and
slew and stacked
By my hut two fat doe hartebeast and thought I
nothing lacked
Then expected 'dash.' To clear his addled head
my man I whacked.

Next morn, as, after questioning, he said he understood
And vowed his word was good
Swore by all his gods he could
With the "king's" assistance show me game. We
wandered thro' a wood
By millet patch to clearing small, and here he said I
would
Find some buck in grazing mood.
So I promised, by the rood,
To dash him if he told the truth and shot a buck I
should.
We entered on the clearing, out he sprang and proudly
stood.
Right between me and a noble buck not fifty yards
away
Yelling "Beef lib! True I say!"
I kicked him in the clay
Too late for me to fire. The buck was not the fool
to stay.
Thereafter I went on in front, a hot and toilsome way,
Till I saw some waterbuck and felt again of hope a
ray
Flat on my chest I lay
And squirmed towards my prey
But saw it most suspicious gaze behind me. To obey
And repeat my slightest movement I had told my
'boy' all day.
He was on all fours, and may
I be punished if I say
A word untrue. The "king" and he like ostriches
always
Hid their heads. Their lofty sterns the grasses short
did clear display
From those mystic moving mounds my game fled swift
without delay.

Two Wrongs: { Red Rubber.
The Unemployed.

RED RUBBER.

Shame on us! Shame! The bitter coward shame!
 Who hear His tortured children scream to God.
 Because afar they cry on Him by name
 Other than ours, we stretch not out the rod.
 "It is not our's this business." "Is't *not* ours?
 Then let no stranger save *our* loved ones lost!
 Let God not help *us* in *our* anguished hours!
 "We cannot move for we must count the cost."
The cost! Not ours! Too far! It is not so
 Our standards take the winds of war when gold,
 When commerce, is the guerdon. Far then go
 Our Troop-ships o'er the sea-leagues to uphold
 The credit of our Markets. He may set
 Not overmuch against us though we spill
 The blood of man, (His image), to earn yet
 More land, more prestige, make us mightier still.
If, when to us the poor torn helpless cry,
 By reason of that might, for rescue's hand,
 We arm if needs may be, and, far or nigh,
 Speed in God's name to save the wretched land.
But, if by tacit nothing-do we stain
 Our White-man honour, let the wide world say
 "These stir not, but abide, except for gain"
 He, when in stress we call, will turn away.

Our safe-happed children chase in laughing play
 Their colored leaping spheres, for every phase
 Of life and living, every year and day
 Has intimate connection with this case.
 A red smear clings about our spinning tires,
 A blood-mist wavers round the children's toys.
 To gain resilience of our carriage-ease, the fires
 Of Hell ablaze. Shrieks earn our silent joys.
 Death to the warrior comes with loosened rein

One thrust and done, but in the Congo land
Quick death a boon. There maimed and bleeding pain,
Of maggot-rotting stumps, the torn out tongue, the hand
With nails blown off by powder. Do not feign
You know not of this devilry. 'Tis true!
All *know* it true. A witness cloud records
These, and far worse than pen and ink dare view
Of babes and women's fate. The sick'ning print abhors.

Where is the chosen weapon? Whose the hand
Shall loose the rack and set the tortured free?
Is it a Sign we wait? Shall not this land
Make Pity's self our mouthpiece? And *our* Sea
The road to haste our mandate? To obey,
Here is no king shall dare but set intent
To loose his crippled slaves. No Pharoah of this day
Cry "hold!" Oh, Lord, make us Thy instrument!

UNEMPLOYED.

You may call me a "problem," or a ruddy "sign of the
times"
All I care is what I am, hungry, heart-hurt, and clemmed,
and cold.
There's my woman an' the kids, they're long-gone out a
singin' rhymes
In the wet, blank-faced, streets—I hate to hear 'em
whining so bold
Sold up the place, sort o' home, where we had a few
sticks to own,
Where she and me got on to rights till them dam works
shut down.
And now, my Gawd, I wish I was doing *this* bit alone;
That burnin' throat-lump, I bet it hurts 'er most, as she
goes roun'
Just roun' and roun', I dunno where, until the chill night
come,
When we drift back to a room, at least it's got walls and
a roof,
An' a floor that's hard for kids. It's precious easy for
some,

Them as has jobs, an' pay, an' food, and not got to pad
 the hoof
 All days about asking for work. Work! Y'know that
 sounds funny
 To want just work an' not get it! Why every horse gets
 feed an' work!
 Yes, easy for them to care for kids an' the wife, with
 money
 To buy 'em all what's wanted. I tell you I gets fair to
 shirk
 Seeing them tired sunk eyes in the worn yellow face
 of her
 Looking up once as I come in to see if there's any hope
 Then. hopeless, dropping them always, Gawd, always.
You'd get to hate not to love 'er
 In a mad kind o' way, if you couldn't feed *your* missus,
 I tell you, you would. What d'I care for this talk, an'
 the shames
 O' newspapers? They call me a "type" an' the belly an'
 heart-ache "abysses"
 I've read it when I had work. "Submerged in th'
 abysses." Just names!
 No kind o' *talk* helps. I dessay 'taint anyone in
 particlar's fault.
 You can't be angry on an empty belly. *I* couldn't riot
 or assault
 All I want is work, an' the decent looks o' my mates,
 an' the street faces
 Not to slink an' think like a lost cur, among th' unfriendly
 throngs
 Like a black man among white owners, like I do, like
 me as the case is.
 It "oughtn't to be allowed," you've heard that about
 scores o' wrongs
 But I tell you this is the worst "oughtn't to be," that a
 man, English, and white,
 With his wife, poor ol' lass, an' the little silly kids, should
 sink
 To go crawling an' begging for work, which is a man's
 world-birthright.
 Work! Just work an' the pay. *Not* "A Shilling an' don't
 spend it on drink!"

Before anything else is done, you, with homes and your
little well-fed kids
Ought to, dear Gawd, you ought to, put your heads
together an' think
How to get, find, or *make*, work for us. The likes o' me
never in clink,
Me, a foreman once among workers. You can't drive
me to the stink
O' charity's contract clothes, an' the workhouse
unmanliness. Think.
Think for the sake of your own little lots, for any, for
God's sake think.

The Africoast.



Oh, a merry land o' exiled men is Africa the Western!
Slainthe! Santé! Prosit!
A land o' work for paid men all. No Master here does
his turn,
Here's Chin-chin! How goes it?
Gambia cares not for Salleone. None o' them care for
the other
Children of England, Colonies all. None cares a jot for
his brother.
Cape Coast to Bonny, who cares but for money, just to
get back to his Mother.
Here's how! Here's ourselves!
(Our paid and precious selves)
And here's soon back to our Mother!

Oh, a joyous land o' bachelors and widowers grass forlorn
Here's one more! *And Santé!*
Is Africoasts flat, palm-frayed, shore. Let's keep it up
till morn!

With "Homeward bound" for chantey.
We're all so healthy now they say, when black-sheep come
no more to stay
But poor good characters, the kind you cut the pay,
And lengthen out their Tours. 'They can't afford to run
away.'

Say the half-caste girls
(Here's fun to ourselves!)
And the half-past, half-mast, half-caste girls.

South Africa is civilised. East Afric's got a puff-puff.
Here's to lang syne in a '*smoker*'!
The Africoast, that's us, our land, a different kind o'
tough stuff,

Here's to black clerks, *and Mr. Coker.*
A christening toast to the Africoast! Our cocktails have
only the swizzle
Their glasses chink ice, *We* should like to drink nice.
Who said they had heard us grizzle?
He's a liar. Here's him! They've meat, we've grim, old,
buck-billy-goat. Wet your whistle!

Here's to the mincing machine!
(And our toothache! Ourselves!)
With the weekly mail Home-sick epistle!
And the lies that it tells. Wet your whistle!
Its tepid but—Prosit! Don't grouse, but
just nose it
Slainthe! Santé! Chin Chin! Prosit!

The Governor and the Climate.



Now of course you all know
That the tale I relate
Is of quite long ago
And, indeed, out-of-date.
Such things can't exist
In these times delectable
When we all on the List
Are so quite respectable.
Having granted that fact
(Which may save us from libel.)
With that exquisite tact
Which he used in all tribal
Affairs on the Coast,
When a word wrongly said
May lose you your post
Or cost you your head.
The "he" I refer to, of course you'll have guessed,
Is my hero, the Governor. "one of the best."
And the tact I will use in recounting his foibles
Is not to give names of his own, or his coy belle's.

Well, that Governor Blyter
("There!" I know you will say
"*That's* the name, and the writer
Has giv'n it away!")
But you're wrong, gentle critic,
In exclaiming that "There!"
I am far too politic.
It's a mere *nom de guerre*!)
That General Blyter
Would commonly boast
That the keenest back-biter,
There *were* some on the Coast
That detractors, the worse one,
Could never but own
Him the healthiest person
In the tropical zone.
And by 'health' he desired all people to plain know
He inferred a *mens sana in corpore sano*
All allowed he had tact, and as Chief could enact
Measures stirring, or those which you just with a pen act.

In the hot rainy season
When folk get their livers,
And cannot see reason
Because of the shivers.
Even then H.E.* Blyter
Was not a believer
In making work lighter
Because of the fever.
Have I mentioned before
A fact which was known
That (what we must deplore
But as much have to own)
That, although when abroad
He would laugh at the heat,
Yet, in letters to Maud,
He took care to repeat
That the climate so deadly was tot'lly unfit
For white men, while white ladies could not live in it?
Who is *Maud*? No handle for scandal's sharp knife
A middle-aged matron—the Governor's wife.

And if you but knew
Mrs. Blyter as well
As her husband, p'raps you
The same tarra-did-del
Would have told. In his way
As is mine and is your hope
'Than abide in Cathay
We all much prefer Europe.
So, if Governor Blyter
A bachelor had been,
P'raps a Colony whiter
His sway would have seen.
However, *cui bono*
Reflections like these?
Things *were*, and I know no
Change in *faits accomplis*
So the Governor sturdy did his 'tours,' took his 'leaves'
Took the latter in Paris. Friends laughed in their sleeves
For, of all the achievements Mrs. Blyter "no fit,"†
Was to speak any tongue save her own not a bit.

*H.E.—His Excellency.

†No fit—Unable, incapable of.

Some years before my scene is "set"
A rare event transpired
(The Coast Staff seldom live to get
Their pensions when retired)
But then, one, Smith, lived on to see
His pension due and went
Straight Home. They made him C.M.G.
(Colonial-Made-Gent.)

No sooner had he taken ship,
To pen these words I falter,
He died incontinent of some 'pip'
They buried him off Gibraltar.
His daughter fair discovering
Her circumstances worse
Relinquished ease and loving
And trained her for a nurse.
(Forgive this awful verse.)
A grateful country to absolve
Itself from claims upon we all
Which it appeared there might devolve
Upon the branch Colonial
Appointed Mabel Smith to be
A Nursing Sister on the Coast
And sent her to that Colony
Where Gov'nor Blyter ruled the roast.
All this was fate, but I must state it was not fair of Fortune
To send so fair an English maid a lot so inopportune.
The Devil too must have his due, for sure it was his plan
did
Bring there H.E. Miss Smith to see, the moment that she
landed.

Now arrows of poison we know are in use
By the tribes in the hostile interior
P'raps Dan Cupid dips his in the same stropanthūs
For his darts are in no way inferior.
As Miss Smith set her dainty shoe on to the shore
Blyter's heart felt a pang which would rankle,
His tender aorta was pierced to the core,
As he murmured, "Great Scott! What an ankle!"
It is said that a lady can very soon see,
Though its hard to tell how they discover
The effect that their charms have on you or on me,
Or how they so quick "spot" a lover.
Anyway, there's no doubt Miss Smith quickly found out
At her hook she'd attracted a biter.
For, so I have heard, it was really absurd
The infatuate fall of poor Blyter.
For the once healthy man (was it part of a plan?) now
was constantly seedy and ailing.
He could only endure but one curious cure, leaning over
the hospital paling.
Let me now "cut the cackle," for we have to tackle the
rest of this story veracious.
But just mention that soon things got further than 'spoon,'
to the point where we say "Goodness gracious!"

It was soon said in short
If you wished to get on
That you had to pay court
To Miss Smith, and "let on"
You saw nothing amiss.
But it needed some *nous*,
For the favour of kiss
Ruled at Government House.
And, although she was clever,
"Twas a scandal too *risqué*
And despite all endeavour,
(Each problem has his key,)
So a key to this puzzle
Was found by a lady,
Who determined to muzzle
An *affaire* so "shady."
The key lived at Southsea at Secondi Lodge,
And a little bird talkative flew there. The dodge
Was the lady's o'erseas who set forth, letter-writer,
The whole of the tale, to the key—Mrs. Blyter.)

'Twas ere the time of Harmattan
 H.E. and Staff and porters
 (The sun had burnt his charmer tan)
 Returned to their Head-Quarters.
 For she, and the feat meant
 All the bush life of tours,*
 Still continued her 'treatment'
 Of the hardest of cures.
 While the Governor headstrong
 Brooked no humbug or sham mock
 But used on the trip long
 A fine double hammock.
 As the cortege "set down"
 At the pillared house gate,
 'Neath the big Royal Crown
 'There was waiting their Fate.
 Ere the great hammock's curtains, which shade from the sun
 The inmates or inmate, in *this* case not *one*
 Were withdrawn, waiting Fate gave a gasp and a hiss.
 For she, and the carriers, heard all clearly a kiss.

Now I frankly declare
 That I dare not relate
 What happened just there
 When the travellers saw Fate.
 For the Governor owned,
 That, although a born fighter,
 Yet he felt as though "boned"
 When he saw Mrs. Blyter.
 And we all must agree
 To that pair in the 'palky'†
 That the case was what he
 Described 'far beyond talkee:.'
 There *was* talk of divorce
 While the fair one, his "slip,"
 As a matter of course
 Was packed off by next ship.
 The Governor stayed, 'twas a question of duty.
 But his lady stopped too with him she styled "a Beauty."
 No more Paris, and as 'twas the heat she opined
 Was the cause of the *faux pas*, poor Blyter resigned.

* *Tours i.e.*, Travelling on tour of inspection.

† *Palky*—Palanquin.

How lucky that we live in strict moral times
When there *could not* occur such a tale as these rhymes
Have recounted. *Our* chiefs would as soon meet a
panther
Unarmed as act so, for *tempora mutantur*.

MORAL.

Don't be a Governor. Don't go to the Coast
Don't keep double hammocks and lastly don't boast.

"Help! Help!"

A Social Problem of Sekondi.

Doctor Minns was an excellent soul
With a sweet ingenuous mind.
Considering all, he, on the whole,
For a surgical man, was kind.

And kind he must have been on leave
To a lady fair he'd met
For he came out *fiancé* to receive
The greetings of all our set.

Judged by her portrait the Doctor's girl
Was sweet. "It does not do *her*, Sir
Justice" the Doctor vowed "My pearl!"
And the photos recalled a Greuze.

Just the self-same innocent face
Of the Master's *chef d'oeuvres* darlings.
The Doctor showed them all over the place
With her every mail from "The Starlings."

"The Starlings," Putney. We learnt by heart
Was the shrine that enclosed his goddess.
We heard of her character, music, and art,
How she dressed, boots, skirt, hat and bodice.

Till we felt that we knew her enough to bow
And to speak, as a fair acquaintance.
The Doctor was booked for a year, while now
Fell due all *our* leaves of absence.

Jones went first, and the Doctor begged
Him to "Do just run down to Putney,
With my message warm" (He needn't have egged
Jones so hard) 'Twas as warm as a chutney.

Next Home mail took Smith and Brown.
As messengers each had vowed him
That, if ever he happed to be 'in 'Town,'
With no business on hand to crowd him.

That each would hie, with the Doctor's love
To the "Duckey-birds" (that's what we called it)
A message give, and "cheer up" his "dove."
That message! Each of them mauled it.

Now Robinson, equally charged, had gone
And next came my turn on the roster
When, equally charged, I stepped upon
My boat as no longer a '*Coaster*.'

I kept my promise, and went to call,
But aver that I felt confusion
To find in the drawing-room Jones as well
Yet I greeted him with effusion.

I found her sweet yet I must confess,
When she owned, the innocent sinner,
Surprise, as she said she "*must* go and dress"
Smith was "taking her out to dinner."

While expected Robinson was next day
To take her till eve on the river
And Brown was—*What* was she going to say?
(Brown, on leave, was a known hard-liver).

I found her fair but I had to share
With the other four in her favours.
While of poor old Minns, whom we'd left "*out there*"
We never heard hint nor havers.

I found her a pearl, and behaved like a churl
For I wooed and proposed and won her
I gave her a ring, *she* a photo and curl
(While I wondered if harm I'd done her).

Of *her* did I think, of old Minns not a jot,
Though my leave was so near its conclusion.
Our engagement she wished kept a secret and not
Any hint to leak out, or allusion.

The arrangement was this, that our joy and bliss
Deferred must be for a season,
She'd "to break with the Doctor," she gave me a kiss
And "we'd not enough cash" was her reason.

So I was to go
"But it pained her so"
To think of me, "far away, earning
Enough to mate
Ah! horrible fate!
To part two hearts so burning."

On board we five met, but in my regret
I couldn't mix much with the others.
While I felt disgrace that I'd got to face
Minns, who treated us all like brothers

But on landing we heard,
(Such luck was absurd)
That he'd had to go Home in a hurry.
Our steamers had crossed.
"Now, what he has lost"
"She has told him," I thought, "Hence the flurry."

We were sitting one day, in the morning,
All scanning the English mails,
When Brown leapt up. I'd be scorning
To repeat what he said. Language fails.

"What's up?" we cried in a chorus "Read!"
"What's wrong in the 'Morning Post'?"
But "False!" he cried "She has done the deed!"
"And, *he's bringing her out to the Coast!*"

A horrible fear oppressed me,
For *each of us* seized the paper,
To glare at the para. What messed me
Was, each of us cut the same caper.

It all came out. No repression
Could hide the terrible fact.
She had played with us, each in succession
While the worst was still to act.

Now she's the Doctor's bride, and will
Be the one White girl in the Station.
We shall *have* to call, or explain to the Pill
Why *we* cut her. He'll want an ovation.

If, gentle reader *you* can assist
For all our sakes use the cable.
They're down in the next boat's passenger list.
Send any solution you're able.

FIRST MORAL.

"Never introduce your Donah to a pal."

SECOND MORAL.

"Never be the pal."



Lokoja.



Sired by Trade, and dam the Administration
(Awkward that phrase expressive of maternity).
Lokoja lies, as doth its population,
An infant mongrel, tin-roofed with modernity.

No unsophisticated hybrid is this child
Of Trade and State, the country's door and port.
For here, the subtle Coast clerk hath defiled
The simple savage, *Watts** a moral sort.

He, the mild black, from Laxos or Axim
With sinuous wiles to eke his monthly screw
"Sells office" to a dusky pal, and sacks him
While some fine day, at audit, he sells you.

Green o'er cantonment bulks the Patés† height
At Niger level live we on quinine
A site of health above, below a sight
Of Hammocks, hospital-wards bound, is seen.

Here, where mosquitos shrill their hymns of praise
To him who fathered th' eighteen months' notion,
Answer we Minutes thro' the ink-slung days
And envious watch the T. X.‡ trek for ocean.

The breezes waft towards thé lines Civilian
The tom-tom band strains of the civil Waffs§
From beehive town to th' barracks Mess pavilion
The *bouquet d'Afrique* stirs the white man's coughs.

Lokoja and this ballad have some points akin
Neither is what it aims at, weak and whimmy
The faults of both go blandly *ad infinitum*
My leave's not due. Hinc illae lacrimae!

* *Watts*—Niger Company's Chief.

† *Paté*—Hill.

‡ *T. X.*—Time-expired, *i.e.* going home.

§ *Waffs*—W. A. F. F. W. African Frontier Force.

Pause, My Brethren!



Exeter Hall. Exeter Hall.
With paragraph brains, and a most strident bawl.
Synonymous with the know-nothing-at-all;
With the "Bother-the-facts! Write-the-Governor's
recall!"

Exeter Hall. Known thro' the land
By millions of Britons who know not the Strand;
But they know it, the home of the Auntie Fuss band,
Who can't rule themselves, but could manage the Rand.

Exeter Hall. It is clearer than day,
That the methods of Europe won't do in Cathay,
That the good souls of Slopton-in-Slush cannot say
All the rules that a hinterland ought to obey.

Exeter Hall. Whiskey's a curse,
And the same quite agree, while are sure t'would be
worse,
If there were none at all. Every crank would reverse
Every other crank's fad, quoting scriptural verse.

Exeter Hall. Collecting the pence
For a campaign of anti, *à bas* common-sense.
Tracts of "How to train Tommy" are sent to parents
Who practice infanticide. Anserine "gents"!

Exeter Hall. Let us suppress
The idiots who in each national stress
Believe every cable, and shriek in the Press
That the Lord God of Hosts may our enemies bless.

“Sweet-Mouth” Verse.



I.

Love and my love a tourney held,
And made my heart the field.
The God his bow and arrows took,
My love her Beauty's shield.

When Greek meets Greek no certain law
The destinies can wield,
But Beauty here met Love in war,
The God was forced to yield.

He armed, tho' she no weapon flashed,
Save but a single glance.
“Enough!” he cried, and owned abashed,
Him captive of her lance.

Then begged a ransom, being bound
In chains of loving art.
Now could no other price be found
Than that poor boon, my heart?

II.

Love, as a pirate, sails the Seas,
Ocean of tears by lovers shed,
Heart and crossed darts his panoplies,
“Love, or no quarter!” motto dread.

Love, as a bandit, roams the hills,
Mountains of vows by lovers sworn.
Taking no ransom, never wills
To loose from bondage hearts forlorn.

Love, as a prince, in palace dwells.
Castles fair that lovers build.
Where, by his fairy warlock spells,
Hearts live again that Love has killed.

The Churn.



"The Bush Fire remarked to the Suffocating Antelope,
'Come, buck up!'"—*Kuku, Ruku proverb.*
"You never know your luck."—*The Shop Girl.*
"Be a Man!"—*Kipling.*
"Kick!"—*Shakespeare.*

'Twas two *Bonny* frogs of the self same ilk
That sheltered from the Sun within a hut.
And fell (Kismet!) right in a calabash.
"Mah'med!" cried one "This is an Allah bash!"
As puzzle to crack's a very hard nut
For the gourd's deep bowl was full of milk.

One of the frogs was a cheerful 'sport'
His friend of the give-up kind
They swam all day, then the latter's excuse
For ceasing more to strive was "What's the use?"
"Better drown than swim till giddily blind!"
Said the first "I never 'no fit' was taught."

Around and about with kick all-a-plash
The survivor ophidian swam on
Till at last, in fatigue quite utterly utter
He found himself seated on a *pat of butter*!
At the bottom lay dead his poor Damon
Pythias refreshed left the calabash.

MORAL.

You may be in trouble of the very worst
Of the sort the Good Book poet wrote
'The waters deep have gone o'er my head'
Think of the frog! what he did! what he said!
For, just ere you sink there *may* come a boat
Or you may churn your troubles into terra-firma first.

The Sub-Agent.



THE IDEAL.

On a cloud-billow white I am floating adream
And the air-hills around me are sunlit agleam
Though the blue seems no nearer than earth seems
more far
I can hear world-men speaking and songs from a star.

Where the snow-whitest surf round a bluest lagoon
Is the nearest to heaven this side of the moon
There I swing 'neath the palms while the smoke
gently curls
From my cigarette rolled by bronze houris of girls.

THE REAL.

There's a tin roof 'twixt me and a tropical sun
In the Surf-Boat Co.'s depôt I'm kept on the run
In no more than my pants and a shirt I've to seek
For the bales of my firm if it takes me all week.

Where the mangroves' claw roots rising out of the slime
Look much like the jim-jams I've seen in my time
There I hunt in a dug-out through creeks for the Trade
With a black clerk whose face would put Sin in the
shade.

"Mind 'im, Lass! Mind 'im!"



Three acres and a cow
For the simple life enow.
One mate, with a vow,
Should suffice a maid, I trow.

Let mothers of England attend to this ditty,
And gaze on their unmarried daughters with joy!
Let them cease to regard the fair creatures with pity!
For my theme is a scheme to give each lass her 'boy.'
Coy damsels of Britain unwedded, unloved,
No longer your left-hand's third finger need hide!
Come, list to this lay! you shall soon live ungloved,
To display the gold circlet in matronly pride!

It's Gilgit knows the bachelor, lonely, snows.
While the Minkolis of Mandalay can pall.
Coomassie's not superior to Beautyless Nigeria,
For the West Coast has no maidens there at all.

'Tis accepted as fact, without carping or cavil,
That Britain sends yearly her pick East and West
If all bachelors abroad were but Masons, the gavel
Would bring to the Lodge all the Empire's best.
Now Mommas reflect on the life and the duties
Of all of these *partis* so eligibly planned.
Consider these youths as your quarry, ye Beauties,
Whose barks on Life's sea are so soon to be *manned*!
It is Lagos' moan man hates to live alone.
Nairobi's wifeless ranches need the sound
Each bungalow of women in, the sweetly English
feminine
Will find abroad her bosom's lord, and husbands
to go round.

When the brute (that is Man) is on furlo' at home
Among hundreds and thousands of widows and maids,
He develops ideals, and fancies, to roam
In search of the 'Golden Girl' through all her grades.
But, in tropical life, for long weeks, months, and years,
Not a single white petticoat dawns on his eyes.
For the first few he meets he would cut off his ears,
And, madly adoring, would grab at the prize.

So, fifteen to fifty, maids with futures shift,
Hearken with a dimple to this very simple plan !
You will only have short time to wait, in gushing,
blushing, maiden state,
It's what Yanks call "a perfect cinch," that you
will 'nail,' or 'catch,' or 'pinch'
That very useful article about a girl—a MAN.

Unless you are lovely, and witty, and sweet,
Neglect the gay stations of fashion and size.
For in them dwell grass-widows with whom to compete,
(And Flappers) were waste of good time and your eyes.
But in little up-country Cantonments you'll meet
Lovely men coming in from Bush, Jungle, and Wattle,
And, so long as you seem to the eye quite complete,
From 'Hark forward!' to 'Worry' 'twill go with a
rattle.

While the surest of covert for bolting a lover
Is to catch them straight off the West Coast.
When a black evening blouse, with a sigh, and some
nous,
And you have the thing quivering 'on toast'

MORAL.

Oh, remember, brave men, that a chick and a hen
Are as different as cat and a kitten !
That earnest lady missionaries,
And tripper girls from the Canaries,
Will certainly *not* give your offer 'the mitten.'
Remember that cable ! "Shall meet you," from Mabel,
"Ware riot !" don't nibble at baits until then.

The Retired Man.



"How full of briers is this working-day world."

Regret around old "have-beens" clings
And "once upon a time" sighs oft
Old customs die hard, and old things
Are dear to us who've worn them oft.

Old hardships humours gain with years
Old wrongs time soothes their sting
Now's happy sun glints thro' old tears
Old songs are best for all to sing.

Past loves were fair, old sins were sweet
And it is hard for us to know
That in Time's future paths our feet
Will long in present lines to go.

Where men have toiled their youth and days
And thought the pulsing time was pain
They learn to hate the hard-earned bays
And long to breast the trails again.

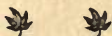
The day we shut our office door
Ungird for good the worn-hilt sword
Scan from the Home-bound deck that shore
Where all our praise and shames are stored.

That day long prayed-for holds no joy
Our pensions each would fain exchange
To be once more the taut-strung boy
To whom all gamuts sounded strange.

L'ENVOI.

When young we long for future times
When old we think of youth
These platitudes here put in rhymes
Only "rub in" the Truth.

Northern Nigeria.



Here, for a score of reasons, are we met on the edge of
things
Most of us slaves of circumstance, but all, in our coming,
kings.
None of us cut from one pattern, none of the Home-tied
breed
The ruler's caste on our foreheads, where all who run
may read.

From far, the World over to Nigeria
From all of the Britains to Burutu
Ice, palms, deodars, wisteria
From back-blocks or heather we salute you.

The nations of white men, whom, smiling, we almost
own for our equals
Look on the far fair ramparts of Empire built to horizon
folds,
Think, when their envy lets them, that this is but money
and sequels,
So little they know us. Our kind, with no straw for our
brick-moulds.

Sent empty out from Downing Street to Sokoto,
A monthly dole and nothing else to Zaria.
Out of cannibals, some cotton, and a cockatoo,
You must mould a British State with Customs
barrier.

A Sonnet to Fickleness.



Jewel with wings, sweet-loving ruby bird
On lights own speed afit in tropic air
With drouth of honey seeks it flow'ring there,
Which having found, and sipped, flits on unstirred
By memory of the flow'r just preferred.
What use the drained chalice, honey bare?
Fickle may be, but wise if free as air
In new flower-hearts to seek sweet joys deferred,
To roam unbound, to love without a thought
Of morrow's morn, so as the eve be kind.
Freedom is life though oftentimes dearly bought
Bondage finds limits to the honey mind
Leave flow'r for flow'r leave sweet for sweets unsought
Humming bird heart leaves empty loves behind.

In a Hammock.



'Tis sweet to lie half-sleeping
Half-thinking, silence keeping
Brain in dreamland, heart in present
Thought and fancy in a maze.
Veiled sorrows softly weeping
Pass, with rosy mem'ries peeping
Thro' a slowly thick'ning darkness indeterminate
in haze.

Home.



"Oh, to be in England now that April's here."

The bare bud-bursting branches, brown-laced against the
sky

Are clothed with cool sweet melody, the thrushes
thrilling high.

About the dear Spring-moving earth, delicate as fairy
singing

Red robins piping happiness musics the year's
beginning.

To the clean wind their clear notes flinging

Throbbing with life too wild for winging

Too glad for singing, yet winging and singing

Song-twig for choice where sap is springing.

Wakers o' the woods the birds are ringing

The Always bell of the old new old beginning.

Wake leaves ! Wake flowers !

Blossom to seed from mating hours

Spring greeneth born of fertile showers

From sleep to the all of it

Hark, list to the call of it !

Love, life, and the sun,

Twain kiss and are one

Again yet again

One and the twain

Life is ended, and life begun.

Trees beyond, the cuckoo's calling

Cuckoo !

Wind-flowers fleck where shadows falling

Cuckoo !

Green o' Spring adeep in hedge-row

Speedwell's stars along the edge grow

Cowslip'd green are copse and sedge-row

Note enthralling

Cuckoo ! calling

Cuckoo ! Cuckoo ! Cuckoo ! calling

Cuckoo !

Teeth.



“ Under no circumstances omit to have the teeth thoroughly
seen to by an efficient dentist before sailing.”—

“*Verb. Sap. on Going to West Africa.*”

There were plagues of old in Egypt's
Borders. Darkness, death, and dearth.
All their pains must suffer eclipse
At Fate's modern curse of earth.

Man's cruelty to man has made,
Ingenious mediæval fiends,
Tortures which chill the blood and aid
Thanks that we live in tol'rant scenes.

By fired homes, bush-lost, and seas
Have suff'rings been and anguish.
By crush of wheels, mine-falls, all these
Can Pity's full meed vanquish.

In biting need, scorn of proffered love,
By justice's miscarriages.
Of all the hurts 'neath Sun above
Men suffer throughout our ages.

Now is a worse. Cries this to warn
All kin, our tropic British
That ere they speed to distant bourne
They must their mouths make Fetish.

Mouth nerves exposed, with Fever,
Racking body, brain, together
Are the hottest iron of Shiva *
Sanity's end of the tether.

Knowing not what they did in pain,
Many a good man has ended
Torture and life at once. Past gain
All that on teeth is expended.

*Shiva**—Goddess of Destruction and Torture.

No help dwells there. No opiates
Effect release. Work fails, sleep flies.
Ever the heat and anguish. Hate's
Own self could nothing worse devise.

MORAL.

He who runs may read it plain
Nor learn in hard experience school
And he who goes Coast-wise, to pain,
Having not Dentisted, is a Fool.

A. and B.



This drama, if ever at all it occurred,
Took place on the West Coast, or so I have heard.

A. had married for money.
For no reason at all had B.
They met, and their spouses thought funny
To see what in each, each could see.

A. was a "bit of a poet"
B.'s mate talked dullest prose.
"Misunderstood" B. let A. know it
Mrs. A. twice A.'s age, with a nose.

I append here a verse which one morning,
Their friends read the case in "The Times."
The Judge said their fate was a warning
To all with a *penchant* for rhymes.

As a sandwich-man A. is *declassé*.
Frail B. takes in mangling, and chars.
A. no longer writes verse to B. *passé*
For their neighbours report they have 'jars.'

It was singular how they affected the jury
These lines A. had written to B. in love's fury.—

“ So warm and white your arms that clinging fold
And sweet the soft enwavement of your hair,
Dear heart that beats to mine with love untold
Save unto me, sweet secret that we share.
Ah, then, when kissing close, and lost to all
But thought of thee, the serpent which lies hid
I'th' heart of all Life's flowers cankered care
Ensides a thought which happier lovers bid
Avaunt from the charmed circle round the pair.
That heart-enshrouding thought of partings near
Which should not come to those whom Love has found,
But which aye stands 'tween all I hold most dear
As penance of dead sorrows underground.
For social laws are iron, and they kill
Those passion-rid who dare to brave their rule.
And how can I, who with a lonely will
Would scholar for your sake in Fate's hard school,
How can I ask you to cut drift with me
From all that men esteem most worth to own,
To bear on your white body all the blows
By which poor tender sinning souls atone
For wandering to the paths of brier-rose?
Oh, men of codes and rigid moral laws
Who frame with chill thin lips the fiat dread
Of ostracism's curse! What can you know of wars
Who live in peace and die in shriven bed?
How can you guage, when you, with lifted brows
Draw back your robes from touching “ stained ” souls
The carelessness of trammels Passion knows
The bird flight after birth-right as a mole?”

A curious end must be told,
That bereft Mr. B. met A.'s wife.
The wronged spouses together condoled,
And are happily married for life.

Fooled by the Forest.

A DRAMA TOLD BY THREE.



Smith—

We are wearied of the humour
Which friends still discover
While wishing much that they knew more
Than what till now has been rumour
All that now is over.

For, as a way to lay the ghost
Jeers, quips, and wreathed smiles,
Of that, of all trips on the Coast
By far, of sport, the famous most,
Whose mere remembrance riles.

We, Jones, with Robinson and me
(Those two agree yet curse
The whole adventure,) while we see
Than guessed at, the whole tale will be
Best public made in verse.

Men laugh and chaff at mystery,
Known fact scant notice finds.
So that, to print this history
Will cut, as by a bistoury,
The story from all minds.

I was a well-known Bisley shot.
Robinson wrote a book
On big game. "How to shoot and spot
It's lair." And had Jones not
For game all games forsook?

So, when we three agreed to spend
(Full licenses to buy)
Much cash, and in the bush expend
A month with but the single end,
For record trophies try.

All jealous tongues expectant wagged,
Half sneers and half advice,
On not to fight o'er what we bagged.
We smiled superior when they ragged
Finding in envy, spice.

By river first we made our way
To bush all undefiled
By man. Camped there to spend a day
Of rest, ere we set forth to slay
Far in the forest wild.

But first, to shoot some guinea-hen,
My scatter-gun I took.
Jones also came, with two black men
To carry all the fowl and then
Bear back the spoil to cook.

Jones—

Now that the tale of adventure draws on to the point of
occurrence

The metre must change to rhythm more worthy the
theme and the story.

Though I abhorre the results the events have for me no
abhorrence.

Weird though the happenings were it may yet be they
earn for us glory.

Empty the jests as the wits of the public out here, the
subaltern,

(Regiment rank of a 'wart,'* with West African status
of skipper)

The Civil officials, his kidney, are like as the atoms of
Dalton

That is, in their minds. In bulk, and moustaches, they
vary, these "rippers."

("Ripper" or "ripping good chap" is the highest of
meed that they value)

But, outside, to the larger world, the Coasts with their
interests narrow

All of leave, promotions and pay are very remote. (May
I call you

Reader? gentlest reader? Behold me, "a toad 'neath
the harrow.")

A peg that is round in a square receptacle writing these
verses).

We appeal to you and your friends, with highly intelligent
senses

Unlike the critics *we* know, such a contrast the swine
were to Circes.

* *Wart*—2nd Lieutenant.

If there be naught of pathos, of delicate violet pensées
 Twined in the thread of our tale, beyond blatant laughter
 or curses?
 Scanning the lines I have writ, they appear to be chiefly
 digression.
 So, if you've paid sterling cash, for this, and the rest of
 the volume,
 I beg your forgiveness, and will no more hold my pen
 in repression.
 If you've *not* paid, but cheaply, have read in a newspaper
 column
 A kindly reviewer's remarks, and have gone with your
 measly two pennies
 To library hid in the suburbs. Or if you have stolen or
 borrowed
 This book (including my work). You're a 'rotter!'
 They say that here when is
 A man, a mean kind of thing, criticising where others
 have sorrowed,
 Working ill paid to amuse you. In the battle of life
 you're the fighter
 Who sees, from the rear, others bleed. But you turn up
 in time for the looting
You make enough fuss for your pay, but never give
 thought to a writer
 Whose books fill your leisure. A dead-head, like you,
 never pays for his footing.
 Parenthesis now being ended, I take up Smith's candid
 narration
 At that point where began the events anent which we
 now seek reparation.
 Smith had shot, for the pot, two fat hens of the species
 well-known as the guinea.
 When we entered a rather sparse copse as called, in the
 Shires, 'a spinney'
 All about we could hear the quaint cry of the birds we
 desired for dinner
 When as sure as He made little apples, and as certain as
 I am a sinner.
 At that self-same identical instant when Smith raised
 his gun to 'the present'

To slay on his right a fine cock. It got up with a whirr
like a pheasant
On his left, with a horrified gaze, couched low in a
business-like manner
A leopard, I spotted his spots, lay half-hid by a jungle
banana
Simultaneous quite were my shriek and the bang of
Smith's choke-bore left barrel.
"Now he's done!" was my thought. (I remember I felt
as I had when a carol
Of Noel a street-singing wait had prolonged for two
hours one winter
In far-away England. I flung at his head all unthinking
a splinter
Of coal huge in size, and expected to see him a corpse
dead and gory
With myself tried for murder. I missed by great luck.)
But I stray from the story
I looked to see Smith in the claws, and the jaws of the
terrible creature
Whose form seemed eclipsed behind fangs. The great
mouth was a hypnotic feature.
When, all in a flash, with the speed of its flight, and its
death, and the gun-shot
The guinea-fowl whizzed (for the leopard indeed t'was
a hurrying lunch hot)
Straight into the gullet agape of poor 'Spots.' If his
throat had been wider
It would not have jammed, but have been in his
omnibus paunch an 'insider.'
Smith lifted his gun (in a second or two the whole thing
had transpired)
And, but for my cry, "Do not shoot," in desperate
defence would have fired
But I saw (and indeed it were foolish to try and kill
leopards with 'sixes')
That, of all his life's worries, the panther was now in the
worst of his fixes.
He choked, and he gurgled, and spluttered, and tumbled
about in endeavour
To try and respire, in vain, for his breathing was corked
up for ever.

I took out my watch and observed, and Science may
 note to the minute
 That (if beasts have a heaven), in four struggling moments
 the leopard was in it.
 From trees, to the top of whose summits in horror had
 swiftly ascended
 With castanet knees and their eyes bulging out, our two
 negroes descended.
 It was not a time for discussion, words fail on such
 startling occasions
 As we followed the corpse into camp. Should we tell
 the plain truth or evasions?
 We sat, Smith and I, silent still, as Robinson measured
 the carcase.
 From tail-tip to nose t'was nine feet! Fate in records
 beginning to mark us.
 But we found that old Robin had had an equally weird
 misadventure.
Our yarn I have spun. Let him spin that of his, while
 withholding your censure
 From his slightly broad Doric and style. *My* fault, I
 have owned, is digressing
 Away from the subject in hand. I may here make a
 note of the blessing
 Of having a natural bent for smooth and mellifluent
 pentameter
 Than to keep me from it were less hard to deprive of his
 ham a Kent ham eater.

Robinson—

It is all verra weel for Jones to havers
 The bit man fancies himsel' Robbie Burns,
 Wi' his lang-winded vairse,—his demi-semi-quavers
 Yet he canna stick to his last but every-whither turns.
 Noo I'll tell ye just what happed when they twa left camp,
 I took ma rifle, wi' a lad, and wandered ben the river.
 Where, sittin' doon, me thocht that, if't did no turn damp,
 I'd bide a wee ahint the bank wi'oot a risk o' fever.
 And hoped maybe a crocodile micht crawl oot where a
 cactus
 Across a creek, ayont a stretch o' sand, looked verra likely,
 And so gie me a chance to try ma sights, and get some
 practice.

When "Presairve us a'!" I cried, "Whats yon queer beast
a snortin michtily?"

The cannie black came near to whisper his outlandish lingo.
"One elephant he lib for water, all same bath he taking.
Master him fit to shoot one time." "I will," I said, "By
jingo!"

We crawled a whiles, and eft soon saw the beastie called
'earth-shaking'

Beneath us in the girth-high stream, oershadowed by some
branches,

He stood, a fearsome tusker, while we watched him there
a playing,

Too fascinated for a time to think to shoot. His haunches
Were turned uswards, the huge black head with water he
was spraying.

Just as I slipped a cartridge in, and, wishfull for to move
him,

So as I micht get in ma shot, I wished to cough or hiccup,
When, frae a twig aboon his head a long wisp swayed
above him.

"Losh! what's yon" I thocht, as, sudden, the great beastie
jerked to pick up

His trunk so lang, o' water full, and threw his frontal
higher.

And then I saw, an' blackie too, that long green whip
swift curling,

A snake it was, which downwards struck as quick as flash
o' fire.

That broke the spell. I slipped ma finger round the
trigger twirling,

The 'tusker' still stood there all fours. The serpent
slowly came up,

To vanish 'mid the foliage, the man my elbow grasped,
Just as I drew a steady bead he pushed my ready aim up,
I turned in wrath "No good be shoot. Them snake done
kill," he gasped.

Too true! the vast leviathan was now with rigors shivering,
Whiles, as we watched, his joints gave way till wi' an awful
tumble,

That sent the splashing spray aloft, he fell, the huge bulk
quivering,

Still and more still. The ghost he gave wi'ane tremendous
grumble,
And lay there dead! The venom'd fangs had done their
treach'rous murder.
I turned to camp to send some men his tusks to get and
bring in
And thocht ma frens would greet ma tale wi cries "I'll
see you further."
"Oh, what a what!" wi' other fleers as similarly stingin'.
But just aboot the time ma folk the ivories returned with
(I taped them o'er, quite ten feet each, a record most
unusual)
When Smith and Jones, I saw at once each face excitement
burned with
Fate seemed to say 'Ye shall not slay, for thus I will abuse
you all.'

Smith—

Of all the Ju-ju I have struck
This was by far the worst,
For proxy slaying is not luck.
To have some beastly jungle Puck
Kill all one's creatures first.

Our carriers could not make out,
Until we raised their wages,
If good or ill would fall. In doubt
Their motto is to quick clear out,
And has been so for ages.

We therefore took but bush-men three
And left the rest behind,
To form a standing camp, where we
Could send all trophies back to be
Skinned, cured, and safe to find.

Well, things went on from worse to worst
And, as I must be brief,
I'll run thro' each event accurst,
It makes me feel as if I'd burst
To make you own belief.

The first day out we found a grove
Of plant so very sensitive
That, as we entered, oped, and wove
A passage for us. Made a cove
Fear lest he might offence it give.

Beyond there lay an open plain,
Beneath a height we rested on,
While just below us (Luck again !)
A rhino slept in drowsy vein.
We tossed who'd kill the mastodon.

Jones won, and knelt him down in style,
Robinson wandered off.

My rising hair quite stirred my tile
To hear that sound to men so vile,
A Lion's charging cough.

"Look round, poor Jones !" I wildly yelled.
"I fear your number's up "

Jones ducked, as though he had been felled.
The charge was launched, my breath I held,
Prayers I sent (and worse), up.

I breathed once more, but stared aghast.
No lion there ! though Jones erect !
Right o'er his form the beast had passed.
Below him Jones was gazing. Fast
His tears fell. "Come !" he becked.

I stood beside him, held his hand,
A sympathetic mate.

Down there we viewed the rhino grand
Stone-dead. His spine could not withstand
The lion's falling weight.

While that rude monster of the waste
Impaled on the rhinoceros.
The horn had pierced him in his haste
Heart-deep, as o'er the brink he raced,
It really was preposterous.

The lion's hide beyond all size
Of measures in the book.
The rhino's head was such a prize
That, but that foot-rule never lies
Our faith in inches shook.

Jones—

If so far you have read, let me beg you pursue to
conclusion

This story we cannot live down, but are writing it here
in collusion.

Smith tells how our Scots friend had left us, the time of
the lion disaster.

But not the clear reason. It seems that lunch drew him
as draws any plaster.

So back he had walked to the basket, with a thirst
which he says was worth 'siller.'

To find there no guardian men, but a great and most
hairy gorilla.

The shock was enough for most men to have lost all
their presence of mind,

But Robinson knew that all apes are born mimics, and
trusted to find

This brute was not any exception. He opened the
basket and drew

Out the cutlery, forks, knives, and spoons, a tin-opener
and the corkscrew.

Then (at conjuring tricks he was good, for the which
hostesses fought to get him

And, being a bachelor too, all the girls used to praise
and abet him.)

In short, at all sleight-of-hand feats, he was easily
nulli secundus

It seemed rather sullyng art, after showing to Beauty
his wonders,

To come down to a bloodthirsty ape in the depth of an
African jungle,

But Robinson's audience now more exacting than
Duchess or fun-girl.

So adroitly he managed his hands, and improvised
Conjurer's patter,

While, a mimic exact, the gorilla imitated, omitting the
chatter.

First, mixing a brandy and soda, to steady his nerves for
the tussle,

The ape followed suit. And betrayed in his forearm
magnificent muscle,

When Robinson, half in a dream, turned his sleeves in
 the style of the platform,
 The gorilla pretended rolled-cuffs, smacked his lips at
 poor Robinson's fat form.
 Then followed the *pièce de resistance*, Rob simply out-
 Heroded Herod
 In the way he performed, tho' for wand he had only a
 grass-stem, a mere rod.
 He shammed that he swallowed the spoons, the gorilla
 did likewise, *not* shamming
 But really and truly succeeded, without any single one
 jamming.
 Then the forks and the knives, when it came to the
 opener-thing and the corkscrew,
 And Rob saw the face of his guest change in colour
 thro' purple to dark blue
 His nerve quite collapsed, as he turned to fly madly the
 scene of the lunching,
 He heard the gorilla pursue, then a kind of confused
 metal scrunching,
 Nothing more he remembered. We came on him
 faintingly swooning and followed
 The path of his flight from the basket, we hoped *that* at
 least was not swallowed.
 No need of our rifles, again was repeated our fortune
 mischievous,
 The gorilla lay there, by its side, quite as dead as our
 other game previous.
 Your ideas of gorillas perhaps are based on the contents
 of bottles
 In which baby apes pickled lie, in spirits of wine to
 their throttles.
 Or the small chimpanzees at the Zoo, but the true beast
 is really tremendous.
 He can stretch down one arm from a tree, raise a human
 to strangle and end us,
 With a great booming chest, which he strikes when in
 horrible anger he rages
 As tall as a man. I had rather peruse this account in
 these pages
 Than meet one. Imagine the shock, as we gazed on the
 wretched gorilla.

So human he looked on his back, we reproachfully spoke
to his killer.
But Robinson said "I'd much sooner have slain than be
slain. It's fair scandals
To take any other view point." This was true so we
turned to the handles.
For everywhere over the corpse there stuck out, apart
and in bunches,
Our cutlery, it was bathetic to reflect on our teaspoons
as lunches.
We recovered the list, all but one, a dessert fork,
Smith vows it will harm it,
And that Rob who has swallowed it ought to pay us for
omitting to palm it.
But that is apart from the fact that unanimously we
accorded
To the cutlery-killed the high place which the tape-
measure showed it recorded.

Robinson—

And that's about a', except counting the spoil,
Of the leopard, the tusker, the rhino, and lion.
With ma mighty gorilla I slew by my coil
O' brains versus brute. But we never set eye on
A beast we could kill with our skill at the rifle
And knowledge o' bush-craft. The worst luck occurred
At our base-camp, where Brown o' Tarkwa feared he'd
stifle,
Of laughter, ere he could relate what he heard.
For he chanced to pass there just ere we returned,
And viewed all laid out in a row our big game.
While, from our black babble-mouthed servants, he learned
The full details of each, and the death of the same.
Since that day our lives hae been no less than a burden
But, now that in print the fair truth is confessed,
No chaffing yarn-spinner will earn himself guerdon
O' thanks. For stale jokes na-ane ever is blessed.

One Reason.



He who to the West Coast goes
Has reasons good, or worse.
Why one of Ind, from Simla's snows
Went there, explains this verse.

I shall always hate it Kitty, hate that jolting of the tonga
When it kept with rhythmic jangle, as the miles grew
long and longer
Saying to the Hills above me "grey-eyed Kitty does not
love me."

"Does not love me" it kept beating, with the echoes all
repeating.

Kept repeating, while the fleeting milestones told me that
the meeting

In the winter would but splinter all my hope of Love's
endeavour.

"Do not bother, love another, since that Kitty loves you
never."

This it told me, can you scold me, when the thought came
ever, ever,

That the fashion of my passion was a foolishness to cherish,
Since the fires of Love neglected must from want of fuel
perish.

And the train-wheels gave me warning like the tonga in the
morning

Rumbling "Do not love, forget her! There are others,
kinder, better,

Who may kiss you, she'll not miss you for your worship she
is scorning."

Love will vanish when you banish all this thought of
"*friendly letters.*"

Can you, when you burn to make her yours, and in your
arms to take her

Be content with coldly writing "Dear Miss Chill-Heart"
thus inditing.

"When your heart but longs for Kitty can you be content with pity?

This from your "mere friend" in Poona who would just as soon, nay, sooner

Be away from you as near you, and as like to love as fear you."

Yes, the tonga and ag-gari,* were, p'raps, wise as any fairy. I will hearken to their saying, and will elsewhere go a-maying.

"Zukhmi-dil"† no longer singing but "Dil-khoosh"‡ the changes ringing.

Pink-eyed Bill.



Oh, what gleams in the pan so bright

Pink-eyed Bill?

Oh, what has the dredge brought to light

Pink-eyed Bill?

Is it mica or gold? So often we're sold

All glitters may not be all right

Though this reach of the river is quite

The best site.

Where the heavy alluvial might

Be washed by the floods at their height,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Oh, speak and relieve me of fright!

The directors at Home *will* be pleased,

Pink-eyed Bill.

And the mind of our Chairman be eased,

Pink-eyed Bill.

While the market in jungles. Raise hope in the done gulls.

The Kaffirs with envy'll be seized,

And our palms, yours and mine, will be greased.

I am teased

* *Ag-gari*—Puff-puff.

† "*Zukhmi-dil*"—"The wounded heart;" a Pathan love song.

‡ *Dil-khoosh*—The happy heart.

To know if we really have leased
A spot where, as good as a feast,
Is enough for a Report at least,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Oh, examine, and don't be a beast !

For we know that there's gold in the land,

Pink-eyed Bill.

That the niggers for ages have panned,

Pink-eyed Bill.

And the old Portugese scooped the stuff out like cheese
From the Chiefs, and the reefs, and the sand.

The black source is not at our command,

It is banned.

Now we have to make 'kings' understand
Any hopeful concessions we've planned.

While, until High Officials have scanned,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Every scheme, and thereto placed their hand,
I'd as soon 'jump' a claim on the Rand.

When I came to Axim, green as grass,

Pink-eyed Bill.

I was filled with an ignorance crass,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Then I first saw your sort, which a lesson me taught,
At the bar of the Steamer, old Ass,
You were gulping champagne from a glass,
Just as though it were soda or Bass

For *en masse*

You come out, with a First Saloon pass,
Cigarette on each ear, bold as brass,

Pink-eyed Bill.

But it seems to be rather a farce,

Pink-eyed Bill.

N.C.O.'s of fine Corps should, Alas !

Be sent Second when *you* are First Class.

But, do haste ye as quick as you can,
Pink-eyed Bill.

Say, oh, what glitters there in the pan,
Pink-eyed Bill?

Are you muttering "muddy," or something is "ruddy,"
That invariable word of your clan,
Applied anyhow on no plan?

Be a man!

Mines are dips in a lucky-tub's bran.
With less Waterloo far than Sedan,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Do behave like a European,

Pink-eyed Bill!

Not a chi-chi, hybrid, black-and-tan!

It's a set of false teeth you have found,
Pink-eyed Bill!

In a sardonic grin firmly bound,
Pink-eyed Bill!

No wonder your bile is quite stirred by that smile

So gruesome. Did you hear a sound?

Sneering chuckle come out of the ground?

See, the gold palate plate's scarcely browned!

Worth a pound.

Someone's been here before us. That mound

Is the 'dump' where the dredge went aground,

Pink-eyed Bill.

And this odious smile, I'll be bound,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Is all that he's left—the mean hound!

MORAL.

Country parsons, and those who ambitiously set,

Pink-eyed Bill.

All their fortunes, and wife's, against odds it's a bet,

Pink-eyed Bill.

That instead of a semblance of cash dividend.

All they get is a sardonic smile at the end.

When the bottom falls out of the mining market.

There's a public has not enough common-sense yet
To come in from the rain when its going to be wet.

These abet

Promoters to spread their prospectuses' net,
Which many skilled minds have composed ere they let
It appear as a lure in a Journal's inset.
And each from success gets a fat perquisite,

Pink-eyed Bill.

Behind the scenes often I've been quite a pet,

Pink-eyed Bill.

As a *persona grata* I know the Banket.

Just reflect that, who ever has cause to regret
'The fact that but heavy 'calls' shareholders get,
And that they, wretched gamblers, are deeply in debt,
There is no one but they! Other claims are all met,
The promoters have vanished long ere the upset.

Don't forget

That this false grinning smile is our only asset.

“Sanu Da Gajia.” *



Were powers mine I would roll back the days
Until life touched again the border line
Where boyhood verges on his first essays
Of puberty, but have experience mine.

With knowledge old, but senses keen with youth,
The rose-path I would tread, without the thorn.
Impulse would follow Wisdom, choosing Truth,
If Truth were wise, if unwise, Wisdom scorn.

Where I have kiss'd could I but love again.
Could own the fair quick monies I have spent.
Have all past glammers, and evade the pain.
Then would that make for pleasure and content.

* ‘*Sanu da Gajia*’—“Hail to you, in your weariness!”—A Hausa salutation.

The Balliff's Song.



You can't serve an Officer on Service
With a nasty long blue writ.
Then the only charge of which he's nervous
Is the Charge when, in a different way, he's "hit."
So it's good to be a soldier if a debtor,
When an expedition's starting to a show.
For you need'nt then examine every letter,
Or suspect a 'bum' in every man you know.

You can't serve an M.P. when he's sueing
With eloquence the Speaker's eye
Promote *his* private Bill is what he's doing
And yours must wait till bye-and-bye.
So it's cheap to be in Parliament if owing
For the fur-coat that on hustings was displayed,
And, moreover, when your motor home is going
You can claim a bobby's escort if afraid.

Thus folk of whom you should be wary are
Those who live by tongue or blade.
Don't insult the House, or Military—ah!
When they're busy by expecting to be paid.
Though a writter's life's the best for any misanthrope
To work off the grudge he has against his kin.
Yet with heroes, and Hon. Mem.'s, he has'nt any
scope
For he's "up against" a class he can't run in.

Sai Anjima.



Until the Armageddon breaks
To sweep the Ages all away,
Melting the polish. Savage makes
Our complex social Code to-day.
While Law Courts still the Jousts replace
And men converse in friendly strain
We yet shall say in parting case
“Well, Toodle-oo! We’ll meet again!”

With hands, on knees, and heads bent low,
The Island yellow people say
Their ‘*Sayonara*’ ere they go
Each on his “honourable” way.
The Teutons grunting mutter all,
When comes the exit gag to speak,
Auf wiederschens guttural
As though to courteous be were weak.

The very beasts p’raps understand
Each dog, and pup, and mangy ma
Some canine formulaed shake-hands.
The Hausas say ‘*Sai Anjima.*’
And, when we’ve slipped a fat *pourboire*
Into his palm, our garçon French
A bientôt Monsieur, Au revoir!
Murmurs as if he felt the wrench.

The yellow, black, and white, and mute,
End off in some way talking nicely.
Each phrase its people seems to suit
The nation using it precisely.
But if you mix them “Waal O’Hara”
It sounds than *Au revoir* more queer
“I guess its time for *Sayonara*”
So “Lets *Sai anjima*, right here!”

FINIS.

SAI ANJIMA!

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

"VERB. SAP. ON GOING TO WEST AFRICA." 2/6.

(Second Edition).

BALE, SONS & DANIELSSON,
83, Great Titchfield St.

Journal of Tropical Medicine.—"... Even the general reader, who never contemplates visiting West Africa, will find it most fascinating. . . . No one is forgotten; the soldier, the merchant, the naturalist, the missionary, the nurse, the sportsman and the amateur gardener, will each and all find what they want to guide them, from the making of household drinks to the shooting of big game. . . . A book which it is hoped will be made a compulsory part of the equipment by Government, mercantile or missionary authorities of everyone of their nominees proceeding to West Africa."

Badminton Magazine.—"The inexperienced traveller, bound for any of the localities indicated by the title, will be under a deep obligation to the author if he procures this little book. It will probably *save that traveller a good deal of money*, and will furthermore ensure him a vast amount of comfort and convenience which would otherwise be lacking. . . . *The little book wanted writing, and could not be better written.*"

West African Mail.—"Verb. Sap.' is a book of concentrated knowledge. . . . It will supply a long-felt want. After reading this little book, which is full of wisdom, a man with ever so little experience will be able to do himself well, and the veriest greenhorn will only have himself to blame if he does himself badly. . . . It is a little book *which no one going to the Coast can afford to miss reading*. . . . It is *good enough to save time, money, temper, health and life*, and it only costs half-a-crown! 'Verb. Sap.!' "

The African World.—"Wisdom on the West Coast! A boon to the man going out! . . . 'Verb. Sap.' simply brims over with precisely the information for which the average man diligently searches in vain a few weeks before sailing from Liverpool. . . . The average reader will learn more in an hour from a study of what Mr. Field has to tell him than he would in a week poring over the tomes in a library. . . . None going to the West Coast should be without this booklet. It will be *useful every minute of the day* while you are getting ready to sail, and will *constantly be useful for reference afterwards*. It *meets a want and meets it adequately.*"

"THE EXAGGERATORS."

GRANT RICHARDS.

6/-

(with two Colonial Editions).

Army & Navy Gazette.—"Clever stories from the pen of a humorous writer. . . . A well-written and very entertaining volume."

Birmingham Post.—"In his particular line ALAN FIELD is one of the best of our authors."

Dundee Courier.—"The book grips attention."

Scotsman.—"Full value in sensation, but the chief merit is in skill of invention and strength of style."

Liverpool Mercury.—"Good to read . . . written with considerable power and not a little dramatic interest."

St. James Gazette.—"Smartly written."

Daily Express.—"Mr. FIELD is always clever and interests us mightily every time."

British Weekly.—"Exceedingly interesting tales."

United Service Magazine.—"Excellent stories."

Vanly Fair.—"The farces are very amusing, while the tragical tales are painful but powerful."

Outlook.—"A pleasant collection seasoned with wholesome humour."

Ladies' Field.—"Full of imaginative power of a weird kind."

Sheffield Independent.—"As good as anything Kipling has put in prose."

"VERB. SAP. ON GOING TO EAST AFRICA."

(1st Edition of 20,000 Copies.)

Published by the MOMBASA
DEVELOPMENT SYNDICATE, LTD.,
LONDON, E.C.

The Spectator devotes two columns of commendation to "this delightful little book" (issue September 1st, 1906)

